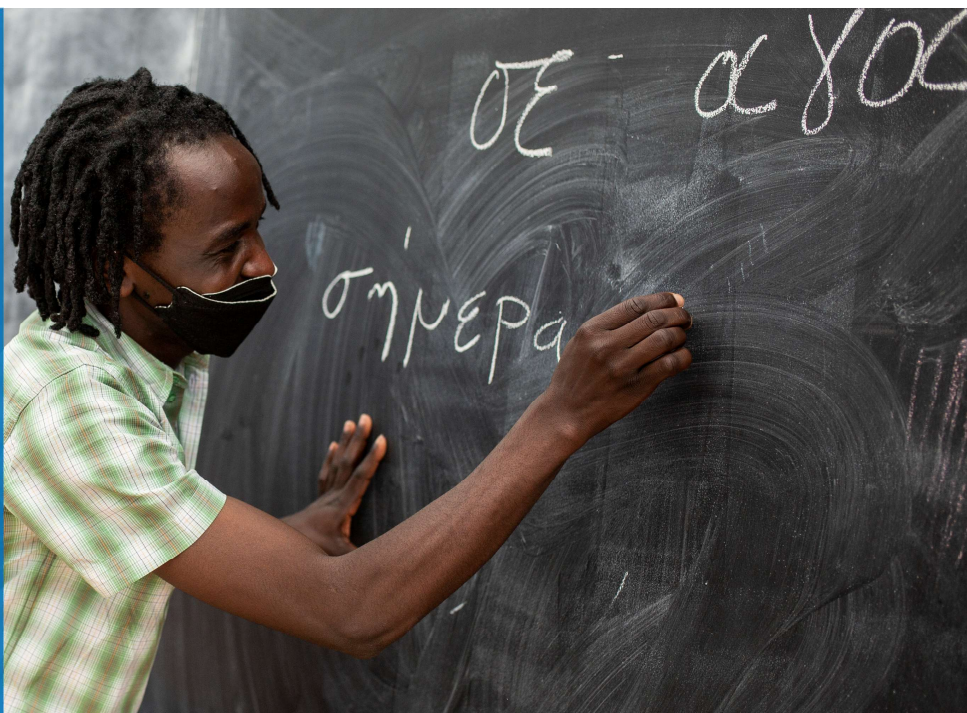


ADVANCING REFUGEE INTEGRATION IN GREECE

UNHCR Greece | Update #3
December 2022



Emmanuel, refugee from Uganda, during a Greek language course for adults on Chios island. © UNHCR/Socrates Baltagiannis

60,270
Refugees in
Greece

Source: UNHCR
estimate as of end
December 2022

Our strategy

Successful integration of refugees needs a whole-of-society approach. UNHCR works with the Government, local authorities, the private sector, civil society and the refugees themselves to create synergies, promote sustainable change and offer targeted support in areas that demand immediate results. In Greece, UNHCR supports works with the Government to advance refugee integration, in line with Greece's National Integration Strategy, and building on UNHCR's 70 years of experience from around the world.

Working closely with refugee communities, UNHCR identifies skills and experience, understands refugees' intentions and needs, and helps create support networks amongst peers. Reaching out to the private sector, the Office contributes to the creation of employment and training opportunities for refugees. Finally, UNHCR capitalizes on its ability to bring different actors together and works closely with central and local authorities and civil society to enact positive change for refugees.

Key achievements



Career coaching

3,960 career coaching services provided to **887** refugees and asylum-seekers.

62% requests from men and **38%** from women.



Employability

238 refugees and asylum-seekers hired in 2022.



Upskilling

854 adult asylum-seekers attended language classes in five islands

29 refugees obtained a driving licence.



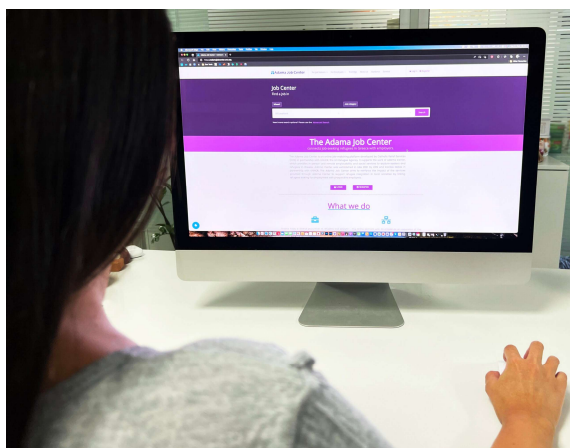
Private sector

150 collaborations with employers across Greece.

LATEST HIGHLIGHTS

Job Matching Platform

On 1 October, UNHCR, the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and Caritas Hellas launched a pioneering online [platform](#) connecting refugees seeking employment in Greece with potential employers nationwide. It was created in response to a need expressed by refugees and the increasing demand for workers in certain sectors of the Greek labour market. It is designed to be user-friendly, providing employers with a powerful tool to identify and engage suitable candidates for vacant positions while enabling job-seekers to easily search and apply for job openings. Additionally, it features a comprehensive section on available training courses and workshops, to centralize this information for those who need it, and encourage businesses and other agencies to offer tailored training opportunities for refugees. Ultimately, this pioneering initiative is a crucial step towards empowering refugees and asylum-seekers to access the Greek labour market while providing valuable support to employers in their search for talented individuals to join their workforce.



Key Findings of 2022

Protection Monitoring of Refugees in Greece

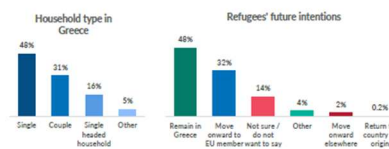


UNHCR led and coordinated with partners the Inter-agency Protection Monitoring of Refugees in Greece. The joint data collection generated information from interviews with 443 individuals who have international protection in Greece. This report summarizes the key findings. Information on refugees from Ukraine is not included here, and can be found on the dedicated Multi-sector Monitoring for Refugees from Ukraine.



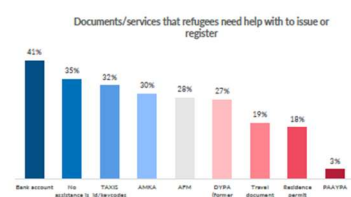
DEMOGRAPHICS

The top five nationalities of the respondents were Afghan, Syrian, Palestinian, DRC and Eritrean. There were 57% male respondents and 43% female, while the majority (43%) arrived in Greece in 2022. Nearly half of those asked stated that their intention is to remain in Greece next year.



DOCUMENTATION

In order to live and work in Greece legally, refugees need a residence permit (ADET), a social security number (AMKA), a tax registration number (AFM), and a bank account. Of those interviewed, only 51% had a residence permit while 43% were waiting for its issuance. Regarding tax registration and social security, 65% had an AFM number and only 52% had received an AMKA number. Nearly 20% of those interviewed for each document or service did not know what the procedure was so as to obtain one. Most refugees faced challenges opening a bank account.



Increasing our knowledge base on refugees' needs in Greece

In order to produce comprehensive, reliable and evidence-based analysis on the integration situation and the needs, skills and obstacles that refugees face while living in Greece, in 2022, UNHCR led and coordinated the Inter-agency Protection Monitoring of Refugees in Greece. The aim of this collaborative effort was to ensure that solutions to challenges are found, as stakeholders focus their efforts and programmes based on evidence in order to better support refugees.

GENERATING LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES

Adama employability centre

The Adama employability centre opened its doors in early 2022 to help refugees and asylum-seekers find work and other support they need to integrate in Greece. By December, 3,960 career coaching services had been provided to 887 refugees and asylum-seekers throughout Greece by the Adama centre, run by UNHCR's partners CRS and Caritas Hellas. Most importantly, over 150 people had secured jobs. At Adama, refugees and asylum-seekers get practical help on how to look for a job, write their CV, prepare for an interview, and understand Greek labour law. They also receive counselling, find help to obtain the documents necessary to access the labour market and are supported in navigating the different public services. Refugees across the country can attend in-person and remote career coaching sessions in English, Farsi, Arabic, French and Ukrainian.

On the islands, the Office liaises with local authorities and public services and informs employers and refugees on specific refugee-related labour issues. It also helps refugees overcome systemic obstacles by providing for instance interpreters through its partner METAdrasi to help refugees open a bank account. To boost refugee employability, UNHCR also connects refugees and asylum-seekers with local employers as well as the Adama centre for job opportunities country-wide.



A refugee during an employability session at Adama centre.
© UNHCR/Socrates Baltagiannis



Refugees attending a vocational training session as part of the Road Safety Lessons Project. © UNHCR/Socrates Baltagiannis

Driving and Road Safety Lessons

In 2022, UNHCR's Driving and Road Safety Project received 400 applications – a clear indication of refugees' interest for regular employment. Originating from 17 different countries, 50 were selected to attend the course and sit the national driving licence exam, with already 29 having obtained their driving license, 13 of whom were women.

UNHCR implements the Driving and Road Safety Project in cooperation with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the Road Safety Institute Panos Mylonas since July 2022.

Vocational projects

In October 2022, UNHCR and its partner METAdrasi joined efforts on a number of integration initiatives that are in line with the National Integration Strategy and the bilateral [Memorandum of Understanding on Integration](#) between UNHCR and the Ministry for Migration and Asylum.

Cultural Mediators:

The “Cultural Mediators Training and Accreditation Programme” will train and certify 30 refugees on cultural mediation. This profession is crucial in improving communication and facilitating refugees’ access to essential services, such as accommodation, healthcare, and employment-related services. It also promotes inclusion by bridging cultural communication gaps. This is crucial to ensure that refugees feel welcomed and integrated in their new communities. The programme will be implemented under the auspices of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum in partnership with several organizations, including the Labour Institute of the General Confederation of Greek Workers and the Vocational Training Centre of the Hellenic Confederation of Professionals, Craftsmen and Merchants. Additionally, the National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance has been requested to provide its expertise to this initiative.

Childcare Assistants:

“Childcare Assistants” is a pilot project aiming at equipping refugees with the necessary skills for employment in childcare and infant care. It is designed to train refugees, to enable them to secure jobs as certified childcare assistants or to join the roster of the Hellenic Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs’ “Neighbourhood Nannies”, with the first participants originate from Afghanistan, Ukraine, Egypt, Türkiye, Moldova, Albania, Morocco, and Serbia and have started Greek language classes as well as courses at the Vocational Training Institute as of the end of 2022. Upon successful completion of the

programme, participants will be eligible to seek employment in the childcare sector. The project also aims to support refugee women by connecting them with certified childcare assistants, thus enabling their participation in the labour market.



Refugees during a “Childcare Assistants” class. © METAdrasi

Caregivers to people with disabilities:

The “Caregivers to people with disabilities” programme aims at equipping refugees with the necessary skills and qualifications to work in the disability care field, specifically as personal assistants. Refugees will receive comprehensive training and support to collect the required documents to register on the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs platform. The project has already enrolled 15 participants from countries such as Afghanistan, Cameroon, Iran, Syria, Uganda, and Ukraine, with the goal of completing their training by the beginning of 2023.

Entrepreneurship Counselling for Refugees

UNHCR also launched the “Entrepreneurship Counselling for Refugees” pilot, which aims to empower refugees who aspire to establish their own businesses in Greece by supporting them develop business plans. Through the expert entrepreneurial assistance provided by Nostos, 19 refugees were able to develop their business ideas. Out of these individuals, five were selected and supported to develop preliminary business plans and are now ready to apply for microloans. In parallel, 24 individuals were selected from 80 applications to participate in an entrepreneurship workshop, which aimed to equip them with practical skills to develop a business plan. Out of these participants, 10 were shortlisted and invited to attend a entrepreneurship workshop.

Language classes for adult refugees on the islands

In 2022, UNHCR in partnership with METAdrasi offered [Greek language classes](#) and employability support to asylum-seekers living in the reception centres of the five Aegean islands of Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Kos and Leros.

The programme consisted of daily, two-hour classes of Greek delivered inside the centres. The classes were complemented with upskilling trainings, including basic computer classes, CV writing, job searching and preparation for interviews with potential employers. Moreover, interactive outdoor activities, including visits to local supermarkets, helped participants practice their language skills in daily life.

The lessons were delivered by educators trained for the specific audience. Additionally, UNHCR provided a bilingual, mini dictionary with useful terms and phrases for their daily communication in Greek.

In 2022, 854 individuals attended the non-formal education programme on the islands, enhancing their employability and social integration prospects.

Job fairs for refugees

On 24 November, UNHCR coordinated a second job fair on Lesbos, in partnership with local NGOs, IOM and RIS. Nearly 100 refugees and asylum-seekers participated in the event, which provided them with the opportunity to interact with 11 potential employers, and receive job offers. This was the second job fair hosted in Lesbos for 2022



During a Job Fair on Lesbos, refugees had the opportunity to meet with local employers. ©UNHCR/Theodoros Alexellis

and the third held for the year, with one event taking place in Kos. In total, 137 refugees were presented with a job offer, and 56 were able to secure employment.

Livelihoods support on the islands

In November, UNHCR conducted a mapping of self-accommodated refugees in Lesbos. The purpose of this initiative was to identify refugees so as to provide them with relevant information on rights, services, and other resources related to local integration.

In Kos, in a similar effort to support the integration of refugees in Greece, UNHCR published a Practical Guide for refugees with information on what steps to take to obtain necessary documents and access local services. This was based on a successful guide previously published on Chios and updated in December 2022.

MUNICIPALITIES AS CATALYSTS OF LOCAL INTEGRATION

Working together to maximise impact

UNHCR supports 11 municipalities (Athens, Herakleion, Igoumenitsa, Ioannina, Karditsa, Larissa, Neapolis-Sykies, Pogoni, Thessaloniki, Zitsa and Katerini), to strengthen their expertise on refugee issues and include refugees in their services. The Office deploys specialized personnel, facilitates coordination of resources and activities at local level and identifies sources of funding that can ensure the sustainable continuation of integration programmes for refugees and asylum-seekers living in the host communities.

UNHCR deploys experts in 11 Municipalities
 to provide guidance on refugee matters.

In the context of its overall cooperation with the City of Athens, UNHCR works with ADDMA, the development agency of the Municipality of Athens, to link refugees with disabilities with the national social protection system and employment opportunities. In 2022, 25 persons

were assisted to apply for the welfare disability allowance, 14 received assistive devices and 60 gained access to specialized services, including for rehabilitation.

Moreover, in the context of the “Integration and Innovation Hub”, eligible refugees and migrants took preparatory courses to sit the examination for citizenship. The preparatory courses strengthen students’ understanding of the Greek language, history and geography, culture, customs and political institutions. In 2022, 30 individuals attended the classes and 29 successfully passed the exams.



UNHCR Representative in Greece, Maria Clara Martin, and Larissa Vice-Mayor, Ntinos Diamantos, sign the renewal of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the two entities.

ENGAGEMENT WITH REFUGEE COMMUNITIES

Advice from refugees to refugees

A group of nine recognized refugees living in Greece form part of an advisory group brought together by UNHCR. The group provides guidance to other refugees to help their integration into the social, economic, and cultural life in Greece. Drawing from their own experience, they also inform UNHCR’s advocacy through concrete recommendations on needed policy changes and practical examples of the

obstacles that refugees may face along their way to integration.

The members of the Refugee Advisory Group have been selected based on their journey and achievements in integrating successfully in Greece. They are men and women coming from diverse backgrounds, like Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Some are proficient in Greek, some are naturalized, while others have started their own businesses.

Outreach volunteers

UNHCR also identifies refugees who are interested to become outreach volunteers and act as the connecting link between their community on the one hand, and humanitarian agencies and authorities on the other. They help disseminate valuable information in the urban areas, including on the available services and how to access them, the roles and responsibilities of different actors, and how to get specific types of help.

So far, UNHCR has identified and trained 70 outreach volunteers in Thessaloniki, Karditsa, Larissa, Ioannina, Trikala.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Family reunification for recognized refugees

As part of UNHCR's work to find durable solutions for refugees, UNHCR's supports family reunification procedures for recognized refugees. Since the beginning of the programme in August 2021 and by the end of 2022, UNHCR and its expert partner Greek Council for Refugees has provided support to 86 cases of family reunification. So far, 37 people have arrived and reunited with their family members in Greece.

How can you support refugees' integration?

- By opening up jobs for refugees.
- By joining UNHCR in public advocacy and efforts to identify innovative solutions.
- By making a financial contribution to UNHCR [here](#).
- By developing goods and ideas that refugees need.
- By exchanging ideas with organizations that help refugees.
- By putting money into funds that invest in refugees.
- By serving as a role model and leading by example.

UNHCR is grateful to the donors of unearmarked and softly earmarked contributions to the 2022 global programmes. Donors of USD 10 million or more are:

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UNHCR Greece is grateful to the donors to its 2022 integration programme:

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